198. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 196 wherein said low shear rate viscosity comprises about 100,000 cP or more upon exposure to 0.3 rpm.

199. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 196 further comprising a concentration of non-toxic water emulsifiable material as an internal phase, said quantity being sufficient to provide effective lubrication properties to said drilling fluid.

200. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 197 further comprising a concentration of non-toxic water emulsifiable material as an internal phase, said quantity being sufficient to provide effective lubrication properties to said drilling fluid.

201. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 196 wherein said surfactant is selected from the group consisting of alkyl sulfates, alkyl ether sulfates, alkyl ether sulfates, alkyl sulfonates, ethoxylated esters, ethoxylated glycoside esters, alcohol ethers, and phosphated esters comprising about 8 to about 18 carbon atoms, alkali metal salts thereof, and combinations thereof.

202. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 196 wherein said surfactant is selected from the group consisting of alkyl sulfates and alkyl ether sulfates.

203. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 196 wherein said surfactant comprises an alkyl ether sulfate.

204. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 197 wherein said surfactant is selected from the group consisting of alkyl sulfates, alkyl ether sulfates, alkyl sulfonates, ethoxylated esters, ethoxylated glycoside esters, alcohol ethers, and phosphated esters comprising about 8 to about 18 carbon atoms, alkali metal salts thereof, and combinations thereof.

205. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 197 wherein said surfactant is selected from the group consisting of alkyl sulfates and alkyl ether sulfates.

206. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 197 wherein said surfactant comprises an alkyl ether sulfate.

207. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 200 wherein said surfactant is selected from the group consisting of alkyl sulfates, alkyl ether sulfates, alkyl sulfonates, ethoxylated esters, ethoxylated glycoside esters, alcohol ethers, and phosphated esters comprising about 8 to about 18 carbon atoms, alkali metal salts thereof, and combinations thereof.

208. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 200 wherein said surfactant is selected from the group consisting of alkyl sulfates and alkyl ether sulfates.

209. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 200 wherein said surfactant comprises an alkyl ether sulfate.

210. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 196 wherein said fluid consists essentially of additives other than a solid bridging agent.

211. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 197 wherein said fluid consists essentially of additives other than a solid bridging agent.

212. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 200 wherein said fluid consists essentially of additives other than a solid bridging agent.

213. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 196 wherein said effective fluid loss control properties is a fluid loss of about 5 ml./30 min. or less using the standard dynamic filtration fluid loss test.

214. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 197 wherein said effective fluid loss control properties is a fluid loss of about 5 ml./30 min. or less using the standard dynamic filtration fluid loss test.

215. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 200 wherein said effective fluid loss control properties is a fluid loss of about 5 ml./30 min. or less using the standard dynamic filtration fluid loss test.

216. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 212 wherein said effective fluid loss control properties is a fluid loss of about 5 ml./30 min. or less using the standard dynamic filtration fluid loss test.

217. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 196 wherein said effective fluid loss control properties is a fluid loss of about 1 ml./30 min. or less using the standard dynamic filtration fluid loss test.

218. (New) The water based drilling fluid of claim 197 wherein said surfactant produces a reduced surface tension of said water based drilling fluid.

219. (New) The water based drilling fluid of claim 218 wherein said reduced surface tension of said water based drilling fluid is from about 25 to about 40 nN/m.

220. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claims 212 wherein said concentration is from about 2 to about 20 vol.%.

221. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 196 wherein said water soluble polymer comprises polymers selected from the group consisting of modified polysaccharides having a weight average molecular weight of about 500,000 to about 2,500,000.

222. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 196 wherein said water soluble polymer comprises polymers selected from the group consisting of modified polysaccharides having a weight average molecular weight of about from about 700,000 to about 1,200,000.

223. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 196 wherein said water-soluble polymer comprises xanthan polysaccharides.

224. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 219 wherein said water-soluble polymer comprises xanthan polysaccharides.

225. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 196 wherein said water soluble polymer comprises polymers selected from the group consisting of synthetically modified starches having a weight average molecular weight of from about 200,000 to about 2,500,000.

226. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 196 wherein said water soluble polymer comprises polymers selected from the group consisting of synthetically modified starches having a weight average molecular weight of from about 600,000 to about 1,000,000.

227. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 221 wherein said synthetically modified polysaccharides comprise a functional group selected from the group consisting of a carboxymethyl group, a propylene glycol group, and an epichlorohydrin group.

228. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 225 wherein said synthetically modified starches comprise a functional group selected from the group

consisting of a carboxymethyl group, a propylene glycol group, and an epichlorohydrin group.

229. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 224 has a density of about 7.9 lb/gal. or more.

230. (New) A water-based drilling fluid:

an aqueous base;

a quantity of water soluble polymer;

an amount of surfactant in association with said water soluble polymer;

wherein said quantity, said amount, and said association provide said water- based drilling fluid effective rheology and fluid loss control properties comprising low shear rate viscosity; and

a concentration of non-toxic water emulsifiable material as an internal phase, said surfactant being effective to emulsify said water emulsifiable material and to produce emulsion droplets having an average diameter of about 30 microns or less.

231. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 230 wherein said surfactant is selected from the group consisting of alkyl sulfates, alkyl ether sulfates, alkyl sulfonates, ethoxylated esters, ethoxylated glycoside esters, alcohol ethers, and phosphated esters comprising about 8 to about 18 carbon atoms, alkali metal salts thereof, and combinations thereof.

232. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 230 wherein said surfactant is selected from the group consisting of alkyl sulfates and alkyl ether sulfates.

233. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 230 wherein said surfactant comprises an alkyl ether sulfate.

234. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 230 wherein said surfactant is sodium tridecyl ether sulfate.

235. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 230 wherein said surfactant is effective to emulsify said water emulsifiable material and to produce emulsion droplets having an average diameter of about 20 microns or less.

236. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 230 wherein said surfactant is effective to emulsify said water emulsifiable material and to produce emulsion droplets having an average diameter of about 15 microns or less.

237. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 230 wherein said surfactant is effective to emulsify said water emulsifiable material and to produce emulsion droplets having an average diameter of about 5 microns or less.

238. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 230 wherein said low shear rate viscosity is about 70,000 cP or more upon exposure to 0.3 rpm.

239. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 230 wherein said low shear rate viscosity is about 100,000 cP or more upon exposure to 0.3 rpm.

240. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 232 wherein said low shear rate viscosity is about 70,000 cP or more upon exposure to 0.3 rpm.

241. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 230 wherein said concentration is from about 2 to about 20 vol.%.

242. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 238 wherein said concentration is from about 2 to about 20 vol.%.

243. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 238 wherein said concentration is about 5 vol.% .

244. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 230 wherein said non-toxic water emulsifiable material is a water insoluble material selected from the group consisting of olefins, paraffins, water insoluble glycols, water insoluble esters, water insoluble Fischer-Tropsch reaction products, and combinations thereof.

245. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 238 wherein said water emulsifiable material is a water insoluble material selected from the group consisting of olefins, paraffins, water insoluble glycols, and combinations thereof.

246. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 240 wherein said water emulsifiable material is a water insoluble material selected from the group consisting of olefins, paraffins, water insoluble glycols, and combinations thereof.

247. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 230 wherein said fluid consists essentially of additives other a solid bridging agent.

248. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 232 wherein said fluid consists essentially of additives other than a solid bridging agent.

249. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 238 wherein said fluid consists essentially of additives other than a solid bridging agent.

250. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 240 wherein said fluid consists essentially of additives other than a solid bridging agent.

251. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 230 wherein said effective fluid loss control properties is a fluid loss of about 5 ml./30 min. or less using the standard dynamic filtration fluid loss test.

252. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 247 wherein said effective fluid loss control properties is a fluid loss of about 5 ml./30 min. or less using the standard dynamic filtration fluid loss test.

253. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 248 wherein said effective fluid loss control properties is a fluid loss of about 5 ml./30 min. or less using the standard dynamic filtration fluid loss test.

254. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 249 wherein said effective fluid loss control properties is a fluid loss of about 5 ml./30 min. or less using the standard dynamic filtration fluid loss test.

255. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 230 wherein said effective fluid loss control properties is a fluid loss of about 1 ml./30 min. or less using the standard dynamic filtration fluid loss test.

256. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 248 wherein said effective fluid loss control properties is a fluid loss of about 1 ml./30 min. or less using the standard dynamic filtration fluid loss test.

257. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 230 wherein said water soluble polymer is selected from the group consisting of water soluble starches and modified versions thereof, water-soluble polysaccharides and modified versions thereof,

and water-soluble celluloses and modified versions thereof, and water soluble polyacrylamides and copolymers thereof, and combinations thereof.

258. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 238 wherein said water soluble polymer is selected from the group consisting of water soluble starches and modified versions thereof, water-soluble polysaccharides and modified versions thereof, and water-soluble celluloses and modified versions thereof, and water soluble polyacrylamides and copolymers thereof, and combinations thereof.

259. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 240 wherein said water soluble polymer is selected from the group consisting of water soluble starches and modified versions thereof, water-soluble polysaccharides and modified versions thereof, and water-soluble celluloses and modified versions thereof, and water soluble polyacrylamides and copolymers thereof, and combinations thereof.

260. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 247 wherein said water soluble polymer is selected from the group consisting of water soluble starches and modified versions thereof, water-soluble polysaccharides and modified versions thereof, and water-soluble celluloses and modified versions thereof, and water soluble polyacrylamides and copolymers thereof, and combinations thereof.

261. (New) The water based drilling fluid of claim 230 wherein said surfactant produces a reduced surface tension of said water based drilling fluid.

262. (New) The water based drilling fluid of claim 261 wherein said reduced surface tension of said water based drilling fluid is from about 25 to about 40 nN/m.

263. (New) The water based drilling fluid of claim 247 wherein said surfactant produces a reduced surface tension of said water based drilling fluid.

264. (New) The water based drilling fluid of claim 263 wherein said reduced surface tension of said water based drilling fluid is from about 25 to about 40 nN/m.

265. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 257 wherein said water soluble polymer comprises polymers selected from the group consisting of modified polysaccharides having a weight average molecular weight of about 500,000 to about 2,500,000.

266. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of any of claims 257 wherein said water soluble polymer comprises polymers selected from the group consisting of modified polysaccharides having a weight average molecular weight of about from about 700,000 to about 1,200,000.

267. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 257 wherein said water-soluble polymer comprises xanthan polysaccharides.

268. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 257 wherein said water soluble polymer comprises polymers selected from the group consisting of synthetically modified starches having a weight average molecular weight of from about 200,000 to about 2,500,000.

269. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 257 wherein said water soluble polymer comprises polymers selected from the group consisting of synthetically modified starches having a weight average molecular weight of from about 600,000 to about 1,000,000.

270. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 268 wherein said synthetically modified starches comprise a functional group selected from the group consisting of a carboxymethyl group, a propylene glycol group, and an epichlorohydrin group.

271. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 265 wherein said synthetically modified polysaccharides comprise a functional group selected from the group consisting of a carboxymethyl group, a propylene glycol group, and an epichlorohydrin group.

272. (New) A water-based drilling fluid comprising:

an aqueous base;

at least about 2 lb./bbl. water soluble polymer; and,

at least about 0.2 lb./bbl. of a surfactant in association with said water soluble polymer;

wherein said water soluble polymer, said surfactant, and said association provide said water- based drilling fluid with effective rheology and fluid loss control properties comprising low shear rate viscosity.

273. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 272 wherein said surfactant is selected from the group consisting of alkyl sulfates, alkyl ether sulfates, alkyl sulfonates, ethoxylated esters, ethoxylated glycoside esters, alcohol ethers, and phosphated esters comprising about 8 to about 18 carbon atoms, alkali metal salts thereof, and combinations thereof.

274. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 272 wherein said surfactant is selected from the group consisting of alkyl sulfates and alkyl ether sulfates.

275. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 272 wherein said surfactant comprises an alkyl ether sulfate.

276. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 272 wherein said surfactant is sodium tridecyl ether sulfate.

277. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 272 wherein said low shear rate viscosity is about 70,000 cP or more upon exposure to 0.3 rpm.

278. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 272 wherein said low shear rate viscosity is about 100,000 cP or more upon exposure to 0.3 rpm.

279. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 274 wherein said low shear rate viscosity is about 70,000 cP or more upon exposure to 0.3 rpm.

280. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 275 wherein said low shear rate viscosity is about 70,000 cP or more upon exposure to 0.3 rpm.

281. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 276 wherein said low shear rate viscosity is about 70,000 cP or more upon exposure to 0.3 rpm.

282. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 272 further comprising a concentration of non-toxic water emulsifiable material as an internal phase.

283. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 274 further comprising a concentration of non-toxic water emulsifiable material as an internal phase.

284. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 276 further comprising a concentration of non-toxic water emulsifiable material as an internal phase.

285. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 277 further comprising a concentration of non-toxic water emulsifiable material as an internal phase.

286. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 279 further comprising a concentration of non-toxic water emulsifiable material as an internal phase.

287. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 280 further comprising a concentration of non-toxic water emulsifiable material as an internal phase.

288. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 281 further comprising a concentration of non-toxic water emulsifiable material as an internal phase.

289. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 282 wherein said concentration is from about 2 to about 20 vol.%.

290. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 288 wherein said concentration is from about 2 to about 20 vol.%.

291. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 276 wherein said fluid consists essentially of additives other a solid bridging agent.

292. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 277 wherein said fluid consists essentially of additives other than a solid bridging agent.

293. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 279 wherein said fluid consists essentially of additives other than a solid bridging agent.

294. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 281 wherein said fluid consists essentially of additives other than a solid bridging agent.

295. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 272 wherein said effective fluid loss control properties is a fluid loss of about 5 ml./30 min. or less using the standard dynamic filtration fluid loss test.

296. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 277 wherein said effective fluid loss control properties is a fluid loss of about 5 ml./30 min. or less using the standard dynamic filtration fluid loss test.

297. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 291 wherein said effective fluid loss control properties is a fluid loss of about 5 ml./30 min. or less using the standard dynamic filtration fluid loss test.

298. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 292 wherein said effective fluid loss control properties is a fluid loss of about 5 ml./30 min. or less using the standard dynamic filtration fluid loss test.

299. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 293 wherein said effective fluid loss control properties is a fluid loss of about 5 ml./30 min. or less using the standard dynamic filtration fluid loss test.

300. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 294 wherein said effective fluid loss control properties is a fluid loss of about 5 ml./30 min. or less using the standard dynamic filtration fluid loss test.

301. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 272 wherein said water soluble polymer is selected from the group consisting of water soluble starches and modified versions thereof, water-soluble polysaccharides and modified versions thereof,

and water-soluble celluloses and modified versions thereof, and water soluble polyacrylamides and copolymers thereof, and combinations thereof.

302. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 291 wherein said water soluble polymer is selected from the group consisting of water soluble starches and modified versions thereof, water-soluble polysaccharides and modified versions thereof, and water-soluble celluloses and modified versions thereof, and water soluble polyacrylamides and copolymers thereof, and combinations thereof.

303. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 292 wherein said water soluble polymer is selected from the group consisting of water soluble starches and modified versions thereof, water-soluble polysaccharides and modified versions thereof, and water-soluble celluloses and modified versions thereof, and water soluble polyacrylamides and copolymers thereof, and combinations thereof.

304. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 293 wherein said water soluble polymer is selected from the group consisting of water soluble starches and modified versions thereof, water-soluble polysaccharides and modified versions thereof, and water-soluble celluloses and modified versions thereof, and water soluble polyacrylamides and copolymers thereof, and combinations thereof.

305. (New) The water based drilling fluid of claim 272 wherein said surfactant produces a reduced of said water based drilling fluid.

306. (New) The water based drilling fluid of claim 305 wherein said reduced surface tension of said water based drilling fluid is from about 25 to about 40 nN/m.

307. (New) The water based drilling fluid of claim 291 wherein said surfactant produces a reduced surface tension of said water based drilling fluid.

308. (New) The water based drilling fluid of claim 307 wherein said reduced surface tension of said water based drilling fluid is from about 25 to about 40 nN/m.

309. (New) The water based drilling fluid of claim 292 wherein said surfactant produces a reduced surface tension of said water based drilling fluid.

310. (New) The water based drilling fluid of claim 309 wherein said reduced surface tension of said water based drilling fluid is from about 25 to about 40 nN/m.

311. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 272 wherein said water soluble polymer comprises polymers selected from the group consisting of modified polysaccharides having a weight average molecular weight of about 500,000 to about 2,500,000.

312. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of any of claims 272 wherein said water soluble polymer comprises polymers selected from the group consisting of modified polysaccharides having a weight average molecular weight of about from about 700,000 to about 1,200,000.

313. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 272 wherein said water-soluble polymer comprises xanthan polysaccharides.

314. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 276 wherein said water-soluble polymer comprises xanthan polysaccharides.

315. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 291 wherein said water-soluble polymer comprises xanthan polysaccharides.

316. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 292 wherein said water-soluble polymer comprises xanthan polysaccharides.

317. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 293 wherein said water-soluble polymer comprises xanthan polysaccharides.

318. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 294 wherein said water-soluble polymer comprises xanthan polysaccharides.

319. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 272 wherein said water soluble polymer comprises polymers selected from the group consisting of synthetically modified starches having a weight average molecular weight of from about 200,000 to about 2,500,000.

320. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 272 wherein said water soluble polymer comprises polymers selected from the group consisting of synthetically modified starches having a weight average molecular weight of from about 600,000 to about 1,000,000.

321. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 319 wherein said synthetically modified starches comprise a functional group selected from the group consisting of a carboxymethyl group, a propylene glycol group, and an epichlorohydrin group.

322. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 311 wherein said synthetically modified polysaccharides comprise a functional group selected from the group consisting of a carboxymethyl group, a propylene glycol group, and an epichlorohydrin group.

323. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 272 wherein said water soluble polymer comprises 50/50 wt.% XAN-PLEX™ D and BIOLOSE™.

324. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 276 wherein said water soluble polymer comprises 50/50 wt.% XAN-PLEX™ D and BIOLOSE™.

325. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 291 wherein said water soluble polymer comprises 50/50 wt.% XAN-PLEX™ D and BIOLOSE™.

326. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 292 wherein said water soluble polymer comprises 50/50 wt.% XAN-PLEX™ D and BIOLOSE™.

327. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 293 wherein said water soluble polymer comprises 50/50 wt.% XAN-PLEX™ D and BIOLOSE™.

328. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 294 wherein said water soluble polymer comprises 50/50 wt.% XAN-PLEX™ D and BIOLOSE™.

329. (New) A water-based drilling fluid comprising:

an aqueous base;

about 7.5 lb./bbl. water soluble polymer; and,

about 2 lb./bbl. of a surfactant in association with said water soluble polymer;

wherein said water soluble polymer, said surfactant, and said association provide said water- based drilling fluid with effective rheology and fluid loss control properties comprising low shear viscosity.

330. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 329 wherein said surfactant is selected from the group consisting of alkyl sulfates, alkyl ether sulfates, alkyl sulfonates, ethoxylated esters, ethoxylated glycoside esters, alcohol ethers, and

phosphated esters comprising about 8 to about 18 carbon atoms, alkali metal salts thereof, and combinations thereof.

331. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 329 wherein said surfactant is selected from the group consisting of alkyl sulfates and alkyl ether sulfates.

332. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 329 wherein said surfactant comprises an alkyl ether sulfate.

333. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 329 wherein said surfactant is sodium tridecyl ether sulfate.

334. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 329 wherein said low shear rate viscosity is about 70,000 cP or more upon exposure to 0.3 rpm.

335. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 329 wherein said low shear rate viscosity is about 100,000 cP or more upon exposure to 0.3 rpm.

336. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 331 wherein said low shear rate viscosity is about 70,000 cP or more upon exposure to 0.3 rpm.

337. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 332 wherein said low shear rate viscosity is about 70,000 cP or more upon exposure to 0.3 rpm.

338. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 333 wherein said low shear rate viscosity is about 70,000 cP or more upon exposure to 0.3 rpm.

339. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 329 further comprising a concentration of non-toxic water emulsifiable material as an internal phase.

340. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 339 wherein said concentration is from about 2 to about 20 vol.%.

341. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 329 wherein said fluid consists essentially of additives other a solid bridging agent.

342. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 331 wherein said fluid consists essentially of additives other than a solid bridging agent.

343. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 334 wherein said fluid consists essentially of additives other than a solid bridging agent.

344. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 336 wherein said fluid consists essentially of additives other than a solid bridging agent.

345. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 337 wherein said fluid consists essentially of additives other than a solid bridging agent.

346. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 329 wherein said effective fluid loss control properties is a fluid loss of about 5 ml./30 min. or less using the standard dynamic filtration fluid loss test.

347. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 341 wherein said effective fluid loss control properties is a fluid loss of about 5 ml./30 min. or less using the standard dynamic filtration fluid loss test.

348. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 342 wherein said effective fluid loss control properties is a fluid loss of about 5 ml./30 min. or less using the standard dynamic filtration fluid loss test.

349. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 329 wherein said water soluble polymer is selected from the group consisting of water soluble starches and modified versions thereof, water-soluble polysaccharides and modified versions thereof,

and water-soluble celluloses and modified versions thereof, and water soluble polyacrylamides and copolymers thereof, and combinations thereof.

350. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 341 wherein said water soluble polymer is selected from the group consisting of water soluble starches and modified versions thereof, water-soluble polysaccharides and modified versions thereof, and water-soluble celluloses and modified versions thereof, and water soluble polyacrylamides and copolymers thereof, and combinations thereof.

351. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 344 wherein said water soluble polymer is selected from the group consisting of water soluble starches and modified versions thereof, water-soluble polysaccharides and modified versions thereof, and water-soluble celluloses and modified versions thereof, and water soluble polyacrylamides and copolymers thereof, and combinations thereof.

352. (New) The water based drilling fluid of claim 329 wherein said surfactant produces a reduced surface tension of said water based drilling fluid.

353. (New) The water based drilling fluid of claim 352 wherein said reduced surface tension of said water based drilling fluid is from about 25 to about 40 nN/m.

354. (New) The water based drilling fluid of claim 341 wherein said surfactant produces a reduced surface tension of said water based drilling fluid.

355. (New) The water based drilling fluid of claim 354 wherein said reduced surface tension of said water based drilling fluid is from about 25 to about 40 nN/m.

356. (New) The water based drilling fluid of claim 346 wherein said surfactant produces a reduced surface tension of said water based drilling fluid.

357. (New) The water based drilling fluid of claim 356 wherein said reduced surface tension of said water based drilling fluid is from about 25 to about 40 nN/m.

358. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 351 wherein said water soluble polymer comprises polymers selected from the group consisting of modified polysaccharides having a weight average molecular weight of about 500,000 to about 2,500,000.

359. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of any of claims 351 wherein said water soluble polymer comprises polymers selected from the group consisting of modified polysaccharides having a weight average molecular weight of about from about 700,000 to about 1,200,000.

360. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 351 wherein said water-soluble polymer comprises xanthan polysaccharides.

361. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 351 wherein said water soluble polymer comprises polymers selected from the group consisting of synthetically modified starches having a weight average molecular weight of from about 200,000 to about 2,500,000.

362. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 351 wherein said water soluble polymer comprises polymers selected from the group consisting of synthetically modified starches having a weight average molecular weight of from about 600,000 to about 1,000,000.

363. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 361 wherein said synthetically modified starches comprise a functional group selected from the group

consisting of a carboxymethyl group, a propylene glycol group, and an epichlorohydrin group.

364. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 358 wherein said synthetically modified polysaccharides comprise a functional group selected from the group consisting of a carboxymethyl group, a propylene glycol group, and an epichlorohydrin group.

365. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 329 wherein said water soluble polymer comprises 50/50 wt.% XAN-PLEX™ D and BIOLOSE™.

366. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 331 wherein said water soluble polymer comprises 50/50 wt.% XAN-PLEX™ D and BIOLOSE™.

367. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 341 wherein said water soluble polymer comprises 50/50 wt.% XAN-PLEX™ D and BIOLOSE™.

368. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 344 wherein said water soluble polymer comprises 50/50 wt.% XAN-PLEX™ D and BIOLOSE™.

369. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 345 wherein said water soluble polymer comprises 50/50 wt.% XAN-PLEX™ D and BIOLOSE™.

370. (New) A water-based drilling fluid comprising:

about 7.5 lb./bbl. water soluble polymer;

about 2 lb./bbl. of a surfactant in association with said water soluble polymer; and

a concentration of a non-toxic water emulsifiable material as an internal phase;

wherein said water soluble polymer, said surfactant, and said association provide said water- based drilling fluid with effective rheology and fluid loss control properties comprising low shear viscosity

371. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 370 wherein said surfactant is sodium tridecyl ether sulfate.

372. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 370 wherein said water soluble polymer is selected from the group consisting of water soluble starches and modified versions thereof, water-soluble polysaccharides and modified versions thereof, and water-soluble celluloses and modified versions thereof, and water soluble polyacrylamides and copolymers thereof, and combinations thereof.

373. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 371 wherein said water soluble polymer is selected from the group consisting of water soluble starches and modified versions thereof, water-soluble polysaccharides and modified versions thereof, and water-soluble celluloses and modified versions thereof, and water soluble polyacrylamides and copolymers thereof, and combinations thereof.

374. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 371 wherein said water soluble polymer is a combination comprising from about 40 to about 60 wt.% of a xanthan polysaccharide and about from about 40 to about 60 wt.% synthetically modified starch comprising one or more functional groups selected from the group consisting of carboxymethyl, propylene glycol, and epichlorohydrin functional groups.

375. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 371 wherein said water soluble polymer is a combination comprising about 50 wt.% xanthan polysaccharide and

about 50 wt.% synthetically modified starch comprising one or more functional groups selected from the group consisting of carboxymethyl, propylene glycol, and epichlorohydrin functional groups.

376. (New) A water-based drilling fluid comprising:

an aqueous base;

about 7.5 lb./bbl. of water soluble polymer comprising a combination of about 50 wt.% xanthan polysaccharide and about 50 wt.% synthetically modified starch comprising one or more functional groups selected from the group consisting of a carboxymethyl group, a propylene glycol group, and an epichlorohydrin functional group;

about 2 lb./bbl. sodium tridecyl ether sulfate; .

wherein said water soluble polymer, said surfactant, and said association provide said water-based drilling fluid with effective rheology and fluid loss control properties comprising low shear viscosity; and

wherein said water-based fluid consists essentially of additives other than solid bridging agents.

377. (New) The water based drilling fluid of claim 376 further comprising a concentration of a non-toxic water emulsifiable material as an internal phase.

378. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 377 wherein said non-toxic water emulsifiable material is a water insoluble material selected from the group consisting of olefins, paraffins, water insoluble glycols, water insoluble esters, water insoluble Fischer-Tropsch reaction products, and combinations thereof.

379. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 376 further comprising an alkali metal salt of a compound selected from the group consisting of a thiosulfate and a thiosulfonate.

380. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 377 further comprising an alkali metal salt of a compound selected from the group consisting of a thiosulfate and a thiosulfonate.

381. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 376 wherein said water soluble polymer comprises 50/50 wt.% XAN-PLEX™ D and BIOLOSE™.

382. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 377 wherein said water soluble polymer comprises 50/50 wt.% XAN-PLEX™ D and BIOLOSE™.

383. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 379 wherein said water soluble polymer comprises 50/50 wt.% XAN-PLEX™ D and BIOLOSE™.

384. (New) The water-based drilling fluid of claim 380 wherein said water soluble polymer comprises 50/50 wt.% XAN-PLEX™ D and BIOLOSE™.